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Extension Service

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Facts about the 4-H Clubs
- prepared for use of
press and radio.

Reserve

4-H CLUBS

What are the 4-H Clubs?

The 4-H Clubs are organized groups of rural young people who are carrying on farming, homemaking, or community activities under the guidance of cooperative extension workers and local volunteer leaders trained by them.

4-H Club work is a part of the national system of cooperative extension work in agriculture and homemaking, in which the United States Department of Agriculture, the State land-grant colleges, and the counties participate.

Who may be members?

Any boy or girl between the ages of 10 and 21 years who agrees to "learn by doing," may enroll. Each group elects its own officers, plans and conducts programs based on the needs and interests of the young people, holds regular meetings, and takes part in community activities.

Nearly 1,700,000 rural young people are members. There are clubs in practically all counties in every State and Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

Over 168,000 local men and women serve as voluntary leaders of these clubs.

When was 4-H Club work organized?

4-H Club work was organized on a national basis with the passage by Congress in 1914 of the Smith-Lever Act establishing the Extension Service in agriculture and homemaking. Previous to this, there were agricultural and homemaking clubs for young people in many parts of the country but the Federal, State, and county governments did not cooperate in conducting 4-H Clubs until the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. Subsequent acts of Congress have provided more funds for and enlarged the scope of 4-H Club work.

Some typical 4-H activities

4-H Club members work on such varied activities as owning and managing farm animals according to the latest scientific methods, mapping their own and their neighbors' farms as to soil types and soil erosion control, planning for efficient use of rural electric facilities, planning and preparing nutritious meals, growing a garden to provide for those meals and for surplus vegetables for market, introducing new seed varieties, landscaping the family home grounds, the schoolhouse or church grounds, organizing recreational activities for the community, organizing discussion groups on current problems of community or government...in fact, they can be found working on almost any activity important to the home, community, or country.

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Former 4-H members

Over 10 million men and women have had 4-H training. The majority of these are farmers, homemakers, and businessmen in rural communities; many are in scientific fields related to agriculture and homemaking; and a number are in positions in industry, business, and the professions.

Meaning of the 4 H's

The expression "4-H" typifies the training of head, heart, hands, and health which the club program provides.

The national 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover with a letter H on each leaf-let.

4-H Club pledge

"I pledge

My Head to clearer thinking
My Heart to greater loyalty
My Hands to larger service
My Health to better living

for my club, my community, and my country."

Objectives

The objectives of 4-H Club work are: To teach rural young people methods designed to improve practices in agriculture and homemaking to the end that farm incomes may be increased, standards of living improved, and the satisfactions of farm life enhanced.

The distinctive educational objectives in 4-H Club work are:

- H e a d -

To instill in the minds of rural young people an intelligent understanding and appreciation of nature and the environment in which they live.

To teach young people the value of research and to develop in them a scientific attitude toward the problems of the farm and the home.

- H e a r t -

To train rural young people in cooperative action to the end that they may increase their accomplishments and through associated efforts better assist in solving rural problems.

To help rural young people develop desirable ideals and standards for farming, homemaking, community life, and citizenship, and a sense of responsibility for their attainment.

- H a n d s -

To afford rural young people technical instruction in farming and home-making that they may acquire skill and understanding in these fields and a clearer vision of agriculture as a basic industry and of homemaking as a worthy occupation.

To give rural young people an opportunity to "learn by doing" through conducting certain farm or home enterprises and demonstrating to others what they have learned.

- H e a l t h -

To develop in rural young people habits of healthful living, to provide them with information and direction in the intelligent use of leisure, and to arouse in them worthy ambitions and a desire to continue to learn, that they may live fuller and richer lives.

